

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

12
1 1943
7-10-43

MORE TRUCKS NEEDED IN THE NORTHEAST TO MOVE
FRUITS AND VEGETABLES IN 1943*

LIBRARY
RECEIVED
★ SEP 2 1943
U. S. Department of Agriculture

A summary of opinions and estimates of professional workers in agriculture concerning prospective needs for the coming season.

May 1943

Because of restrictions on the manufacture and sale of trucks for civilian use, shortages in the numbers of trucks available for the movement of fruits and vegetables may develop in certain areas in 1943. In order to determine the extent of such prospective shortages, the Fruit and Vegetable Branch, Food Distribution Administration, asked the Northeastern Regional Office to assemble whatever information could be secured on this subject in each Northeastern State.

The problem was presented to the State Extension Services and to State Departments of Markets in the Northeast, and to Federal News Reporters in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh. Extension Directors in several States gave estimates on the basis of reports from county agents. In other States, estimates were made on a state-wide basis. Some replies were based on the observations of State and Federal Market Reporters, particularly those which are concerned with commercial distribution.

Because of the need for haste in securing any useful information which was available, an exact analysis of the situation was not obtainable. The replies are no doubt influenced by the individual opinions of the respondents and present facets of the situation which are not strictly comparable. They do depict a composite idea of a growing transportation problem and of certain steps which may be taken to reduce the inconvenience which are certain to develop in 1943.

SUMMARY

More trucks will be needed in the Northeast this year if the 1943 crops of fruit and vegetables are to be transported without waste. Handicaps are recognized. Even under the best operating conditions, there will be a shortage. This shortage is being

* Prepared by Thomas L. Cleary, Acting Chief, Market Activities Section, and Joseph B. Robinson, Assistant Agricultural Economist, Northeastern Regional Office, Food Distribution Administration, 150 Broadway, New York City.

partially overcome by reductions in commercial services which have occasioned certain operating inconveniences and which have reduced efficiency. More than half of the States need additional trucks. Minimum needs are for at least 2,500 more trucks.

Another critical factor in many areas is the shortage of drivers and mechanics. In a few areas, there is some difficulty in securing gasoline.

Tires are a less important problem but may be critical because of delays in repairing or securing new tires.

For hauling heavy loads of potatoes and apples at harvest time, many worn tires will need to be replaced in some counties next fall.

Commercial truckers are reluctant in some States to make long trips in rural areas because of the possibility of breakdowns or blow-outs which might leave them stranded with a load of perishable produce.

STATE BY STATE REPORT

CONNECTICUT . The Director of Markets reports that distributors in 6 market areas have made adjustments in their distribution practices and services. They expect to keep most of their trucks rolling this summer.

Special services and extra services have been dropped in many market areas. Shortage of manpower has reduced the number of trucker-dealers to about 75 percent of the 1940 figures. In some markets, house-to-house peddlers have dropped to 25 percent of those available in 1940. Gasoline shortages, lack of supplies of cheap fresh fruits and vegetables, and diversion of personnel to war industries account for this. Truckers, hauling from distant out-of-state markets, are somewhat reduced in numbers, but enough rail facilities appear to be available to make up for this shortage.

Incomplete information on growers' trucks indicates that most growers will be able to get their produce to market about as usual.

The State Extension Service reports peak periods of movement of produce in the State as ranging from July to October. Estimates from 6 of the 8 counties indicate that 2,230 trucks will be available for such movement and that no more trucks will be needed this summer if sufficient repair parts and gasoline are available, together with a few more tires. If local surpluses must be moved to other markets, some difficulties may develop in Fairfield County.

Tolland County has a labor and gasoline shortage. Middlesex, New London, and Windham Counties report no limiting factor.

DELAWARE The Director of the State Board of Agriculture finds that the lack of repair parts often keeps trucks idle for several days or weeks. The Secretary of the Delaware Motor Truckers Association tells him that there will be a serious shortage of trucks this season. From 150 to 200 additional trucks is the vital minimum needed in the State.

MAINE The State Extension Service reports that many farm trucks have been severely used during the past year in connection with lumbering and other activities associated with the war effort. Many may not be available for moving fruits and vegetables this year due to breakdowns or to diversion to other uses. The peak period extends from July to October with potato planting and harvesting times creating special demands for trucks. Tires on many trucks will suffice until potato-harvest time but tire replacements will be needed then. There were 13,118 farm trucks in the State in 1940 but the number is now lower. Needed replacements are estimated at 1,312. If only the potato-growing areas are considered, about 320 new trucks will be needed. Another 160 trucks there need major repairs and replacements, and 1,600 need minor repairs. Most of the trucks should be of a ton-and-a-half capacity.

MARYLAND The Federal Market Reporter believes that there are enough trucks available to move all fruits and vegetables in the Baltimore market and to nearby markets, provided sufficient gasoline and repair parts are available to move fruits and vegetables. The peak period extends from July to September. Some 250 additional trucks of a ton-and-a-half, 95 of three-ton, 71 of five-ton, and 14 of ten-ton capacity will be needed this year.

Queen Anne's County anticipates no difficulties provided that drivers are available and repair parts, such as universal joints, radiators, and wheel bearings, can be secured. It is impossible at present to replace motors. Prince George's and Frederick Counties foresee no major difficulty for 1943. Charles County needs repairs and mechanics. Allegany and Kent Counties need repairs. Worcester County reports tire and repair difficulties and the need for 15 trucks of a ton-and-a-half, 3 of three-ton, 2 of five-ton, and 1 or 2 of ten-ton capacity.

Wicomico County needs 25 more trucks of a ton-and-a-half capacity. The county agent states that, unless O. D. T. regulations are relaxed, some 90 percent of the county truckers will not haul.

SEP 2 1943

Talbot County needs 10 trucks of a ton-and-a-half, 5 of three-ton, one of five-ton, and one of ten-ton capacity, assuming that the canneries will continue to get the other trucks as usual which they need.

Somerset County needs 25 ton-and-a-half trucks, 25 of three-ton, and 50 of five-ton capacity. Tires, repairs, and men to drive trucks are also in short supply. About 100 trucks are available at present for hauling fruits and vegetables, but 150 trucks will be needed during the period of peak operations.

Harford County needs 30 trucks of a ton-and-a-half and 12 of three-ton capacity. There is considerable need of more repairs. Dorchester County needs 70 trucks of a ton-and-a-half, 15 of three-ton, 10 of five-ton, and 5 of ten-ton capacity. Repairs and drivers are also indicated as in short supply.

Carroll County grows no fruit and vegetable crops for market.

Anne Arundel County needs 30 trucks of a ton-and-a-half and 5 of five-ton capacity. In addition to the shortage of repairs and mechanics, major difficulties are the detailed procedures and the length of time needed to secure gasoline and tires.

One County, not identified, needs 25 trucks of ton-and-a-half, 10 of three-ton, 5 of five-ton, and 5 of ten-ton capacity, together with tires and repairs. A second unidentified county reports that there will be enough trucks to handle fruits and vegetables.

MASSACHUSETTS In Boston, the Federal Market Reporter anticipates no shortage of trucks this season in the market or to nearby markets, provided sufficient labor is available to drive the trucks and provided repairs can be made as needed. Reductions in commercial services have been made which are causing some endurable inconveniences. No tire or gasoline difficulties have so far developed. About the usual number of trucks continue to operate.

The State Extension Service estimates peak needs for trucks as occurring in July and August. Most local produce, except onions and potatoes, customarily moves to market in the trucks of growers. The onions and potatoes are commonly moved by transportation companies. Though no figures are given, it is estimated that 10 percent more trucks will be needed. Unless additional trucks are obtained, there may be some losses in quality during peak periods due to unavoidable delays.

About 10 percent of the available trucks are laid up for repairs, however, so that improvement of the repair situation would tend to relieve the shortage. Mechanics to make the repairs, as well as the repair parts themselves, are needed. Gasoline supplies are also limited.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

The State Director of Extension anticipates that the chief difficulties which may develop will be on local hauls, partly due to reduced commercial transport facilities and partly to the diversion of trucks to other uses, including the hauling of forest products.

Apple growers, off the main highway, may have difficulty in securing the services of truck transportation companies. Such companies are also having difficulty in maintaining their services. The director states that "No doubt several hundred one-and-a-half and three-ton trucks are needed and could be sold if they were available." There is a shortage of gasoline and there are delays in securing repair parts, but farmers are planning generally to conserve their trucking facilities. No serious difficulty is anticipated until fall when there will be a shortage in some areas at the peak of the harvesting period.

NEW JERSEY

The State Extension Service estimates that about 400 fruit and vegetable trucks are urgently needed in the State. Many more are in need of repair parts. No separate indication is given of the need for commercial trucks in the State though certain county estimates appear to be limited to that type. August and September appear to be the months of peak movement, with June and July important in many counties. Estimates by county agents in eight important fruit and vegetable areas are given in the appended table. About 80 percent of the trucks in use are of three-ton capacity or less. Most of the remainder are from three to five ton capacity.

Burlington County needs 35 more trucks. Repair parts are difficult to get. Cumberland County needs 30 trucks (probably commercial) of 6 to 7 tons. Repair parts and drivers are also needed. Middlesex County needs more trucks, particularly if the usual number of out-of-county trucks fails to appear. The potato crop (from 14,000 acres) is dependent on such transportation. Repairs are also needed. In Camden County, the trucking situation depends on maintaining the services of 4 or 5 produce truckers. If present numbers of trucks can be maintained in Monmouth County, the supply will be sufficient. A limiting factor is the refusal of the District Allocation Officer to grant replacements (repairs).

In Atlantic County, 10 more trucks of a ton-and-a-half and 10 of three-ton capacity are needed. Repair parts and mechanics are limiting factors. Bumper crops will over-tax available trucks. In Bergen County, there are enough trucks, provided sufficient gasoline is available without extra red tape. In Gloucester County, 250 more trucks are needed. Repair parts and tires are scarce.

NEW YORK

In New York City, the Federal Market News Reporter finds that enough trucks are available in the market for contact with nearby areas to handle the fruit and vegetable receipts, provided repairs and labor (drivers) are sufficient. Most of the commercial trucks are hired ones of ten-ton capacity or more. They are old and worn and need repairs.

The State Extension Service considers August 1 as the start of peak movements for fruit and vegetables except in the Long Island area in which the movement starts at an earlier date.

Difficulty is anticipated in the up-state area this year where most of the movement is by farmer's trucks. There may be some slackening of shipments by commercial trucks and by merchant truckers. This may handicap the efficient movement of peas, unless pre-cooled, in the Chenango-Madison area. The difficulty of securing repair parts for trucks and of labor, because of better economic opportunities elsewhere, is likely to prove more critical in New York this year than is the actual number of trucks.

State registrations indicate some 763 registered haulers of fruit and vegetables last year (ending this June 30) with probably even more (900) not registered. Many of these truckers work in factories during the winter. The question is, "Will they resume their trucking operations this summer?"

PENNSYLVANIA

In Philadelphia, the Federal Market News Reporter indicates the need, expressed by the local truckers' association, for 25 to 50 extra trucks to handle normal supplies of fruit and vegetables within the market. (Presumably these would be large trucks.) He indicates that 60 to 100 additional trucks will be needed to take care of the movements between the Philadelphia market and other areas during the summer. The size of such trucks is not stated. Practically all operators find the repair-parts shortage to be the greatest handicap, and several trucks have been laid up for a month or more waiting for these parts.

In Pittsburgh, the local branch of the National League of Wholesale Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Distributors analyzed the local situation. It was concluded that 20 trucks of a ton-and-a-half, 20 of three-ton, 20 of five-ton and 5 of ten-ton capacity will be needed in addition to the existing trucks in order to handle the wholesale and retail movements of fresh fruits and vegetables prior to July 4. After that date, needs are likely to become increasingly acute, and it is considered doubtful if more than half of the 1,535 trucks now in use will still be in commission next year. The greatest difficulty will be to secure certain essential repair parts.

The State Department of Agriculture reports that there was a shortage of trucks last fall and that the situation is now worse than it was then.

The State Extension Service checked with county agents. Incomplete returns indicate that the problem is not too serious so far as numbers of trucks needed are concerned. Lack of repair parts and tires are the principal limiting factors. A few counties indicate a shortage of drivers. Only three counties--Bucks, Berks, and Lackawanna--report that more trucks will be needed but numbers are not given.

RHODE ISLAND

The Extension Service reports a reduction in the number of commercial trucks in use. This is partly due to opportunities to earn more elsewhere than by hauling farm produce and partly because the old trucks are unreliable and subject to breakdowns at inopportune moments. Promptness of tire service and the availability of repair parts are other factors.

In all, some 65 new trucks will be needed on farms this year. The preferred capacity is 3 to 5 tons. A few should be large ones. The peak need for trucks to haul fresh vegetables will be from July 16 to September 15. The peak needs for trucks to move apples will be from September 15 to October 31.

The State Department of Agriculture and Conservation indicates that probably enough trucks are on hand to handle the local produce but that considerable independence must be placed on imports by trucks or rail. No figures were given.

VERMONT

The State Extension Service indicates that peak needs occur after September 1 and, in the apple areas, extend to December 1. Except in Grand Isle, enough trucks are expected to be available. In the Grand Isle area, growers depend chiefly on peddlers to haul their produce but no estimates of their probable number in 1943 are now available. Windham County could use 2 or 3 extra ton-and-a-half and three-ton trucks to haul apples to New York. Some extra trucks may be needed for potatoes. Repair parts are the principal limiting factor.

The State Director of Markets considers apples, potatoes, and hay as the three crops which may require additional trucking assistance. Most of these crops move to market by truck. He does not consider the situation serious if present truck numbers can be maintained except perhaps for potatoes, in case a large crop needs to be moved quickly because of cold weather.

WEST VIRGINIA

The State Commissioner of Agriculture reports that about 25 trucks have been licensed to haul fruit and vegetables for hire. No figures are available on private trucks.

A preliminary report from the State Director of Extension for 37 Counties shows the need for at least 56 more trucks this year but in most counties the situation can be taken care of with the trucks now on hand. Some additional trucks may be necessary next fall in the apple-growing regions of Jefferson, Berkeley and Morgan Counties, and possibly in Hampshire, Grant, Hardy and Mineral. Limiting factors do not appear to be acute in the State although there may be some difficulties with gasoline, tires, and repair parts.

NEED FOR FRUIT & VEGETABLE TRUCKS
AS REPORTED BY STATES & COUNTIES
FOR 1943

State	Peak periods	Trucks on hand	Need more	Number needed	Limiting factors
Connecticut	July-October	2,230	No	-	Repairs, tires and gas.
Delaware	?	?	Yes	150-200	Repairs are hard to get.
Maine	July-October	13,118 <u>/1</u>	Yes	1,312	Tires and gas are scarce.
Maryland.	July-September	4,600	Yes	431 <u>/</u>	Repairs, tires, gas and government regulations.
Massachusetts	July-August	?	Yes	10%	Repairs and gas.
New Hampshire	August-November	?	Possibly	?	Repairs and gas.
New Jersey	August-September	5,025 <u>/</u>	Yes	400	Repairs and gas.
Rhode Island	July-October	?	Yes	65	Repairs and tires.
Vermont	September-November	370 <u>/</u>	Some	2 - 3	Repairs.
New York	August	1,600 <u>/</u> <u>/2</u>	?	?	---

/1 Includes all farm trucks. In potato areas, about 320 more are needed as replacements. Some 1,600 farm trucks need minor repairs, 1,440 need some major repairs and 160 need major repairs and considerable replacements in 1943.

/2 Merchant truckers only.

NEED FOR FRUIT & VEGETABLE TRUCKS
AS REPORTED BY STATES & COUNTIES
FOR 1943

STATE AND COUNTY	Peak periods	Trucks on hand	Need more	Number needed	Limiting factors
<u>Connecticut</u>					
Fairfield	August-October	900	No	None	May need more gas and tires.
Hartford	July-November	650	No	None	Repair parts scarce.
Litchfield	August-November	-	No	None	Repair parts scarce, gas & tires vary.
Middlesex	August-October	100	No	None	None.
New Haven	June-August	500	No	None	Gasoline.
New London	August-November	35	No	None	None.
Tolland	June 15-July 1	-	No	None	Labor and gasoline.
Windham	August 15-November 10 September 15-October 15	40-50	No	None	None.
<u>New Jersey</u>					
Burlington	June 15-October 10	325	Yes	35	Repair parts are hard to get.
Cumberland	June-September	50 /3	Yes	20	Repair parts and labor scarce.
Middlesex	June 15-September 14	1,100	Doubtful	?	Repair parts and labor scarce.
Camden	July-September	275-300	Doubtful	?	---
Monmouth	June-September	900	Not if none wear out.	-	Refusal of alloca- tion to grant re- placements. Gaso- line is also short.
Atlantic	June 15-September 15	150 /4	Yes	20	Repair parts and mechanics are scarce.
Bergen	August 15-October 15	300	No	-	Gasoline needed.

NEED FOR FRUIT & VEGETABLE TRUCKS
AS REPORTED BY STATES & COUNTIES
FOR 1943

STATE AND COUNTY	Peak periods	Trucks on hand	Need more	Number needed	Limiting factors
<u>New Jersey (cont.)</u>					
Gloucester	July-August	1,400	Yes	250	Repair parts and tires are hard to get.
<u>/3</u>	The county agent evidently referred to farmers' trucks travelling to terminal markets. A survey of farm trucks in the county identified 814 trucks as on farms. The survey, which was state-wide, covered 48.8 percent of the number noted in the 1940 census.				
<u>/4</u>	The farm truck survey showed 542 trucks on farms in 1942.				
<u>Maryland.</u>					
Anne Arundel	July 15-September	400 <u>/5</u>	Yes	35	Mechanics, repair parts, gas rationing procedures, delay in tire certification.
Allegany	August 15-November 15	350	No	0	Labor shortages, repairs delayed.
Calvert	---	-	-	-	Such crops not marketed.
Carroll	June 15-September	75-100	Some	10	Any decrease in gas or tires.
Charles	---	Enough	No	-	Repair parts and repairs difficult.
Dorchester	August 15-September 15	500	Yes	100	Repairs and operators needed.
Frederick	August-October	400	No	-	No difficulties.

NEED FOR FRUIT & VEGETABLE TRUCKS
AS REPORTED BY STATES & COUNTIES
FOR 1943

STATE AND COUNTY	Peak periods	Trucks on hand	Need more	Number needed	Limiting factors
<u>Maryland</u>					
Harford	August 15-October 10	430	Yes	42	Repairs difficult.
Kent	August-October 15	30-35	No	-	If can be kept re- paired.
Prince Georges	June 15-October 15	300	No	-	No difficulties.
Queen Annes	August-September	30	No	-	Need drivers and repair parts.
Somerset	June 15-August 1	100	Yes	100	Need tires, repair parts, and drivers.
Talbot	July 10-September 15	425	Yes	17	No difficulties.
Washington	July-September	40	Yes	25	ODT regulations must be relaxed or 90% of county truckers will not haul.
Wicomico	June 15-September	35	Yes	35	Repair parts and mechanics.
Worcester	July-September 15	800	Yes	22	Tires and repair parts.
?	June 15-September	600	Yes	45	Repair parts and tires.
?	July 15	60	Yes	-	Gasoline needed.

/5 A total of 632 farm trucks are in the county.

NEED FOR FRUIT & VEGETABLE TRUCKS
AS REPORTED BY STATES & COUNTIES
FOR 1943

STATE AND COUNTY	Peak periods	Trucks on hand	Need more	Number needed	Limiting factors
<u>Vermont</u>					
Addison	September 1-November	100	No	None	None.
Bennington	January-March	?	No	None	Gas and tires scarce.
Caledonia	September-November	?	No	None	Tires may cause trouble.
Chittenden	September-December	25	No	None	Gas and tires import- ant.
Franklin	October	50	No	None	Repair parts delay trucks.
Grand Isle	September 15-November	10	Yes	?	Depend on peddlers who may not come this year.
Lamoille	September-October	50	No	None	None.
Orange	October	25	No	None	Good trucks busy, poor trucks dropping out.
Orleans	September	40	No	None	Repair parts needed.
Rutland	September 15-November 15	50	No	None	Repair parts needed.
Washington	October-November	20	No	None	None.
Windham	September 15-October 15	Ample.	No	2-3	Need extra trucks for potatoes, also need repair parts.
Windsor	September 15-October	Enough	No	2-3	None.

NEED FOR FRUIT AND VEGETABLE TRUCKS
AS REPORTED BY STATES AND COUNTIES
FOR 1943

STATE AND
COUNTY

	Peak periods	Trucks on hand	Need more	Number needed	Limiting factors
<u>West Virginia</u>					
Barbour	June-October	7	No	None	No trouble anti- cipated.
Brooke	September-October	-	No	None	None so far.
Cabell	July-September	60	No	-	
Clay	July-September	3	No		Trucks doing con- tract hauling to mines, etc.
Doddridge	July-August	Enough	No	None	No problem.
Fayette	July-August	200	-	-	Tires a problem.
Gilmer	September-October	-	No	-	
Grant	June-October	6	No	-	No problems.
Greenbrier	August-November	200	Yes	15	Ration board cooperative.
Hampshire	June-September	35	No	-	Repairs may be a problem.
Hancock	June	-	No	-	No problems.
Harrison	July-August-November	150	No	None	No problems.
Jackson	July-September-November	-	No	-	
Jefferson	May-August	400	No	-	
Kanawha	October-November				
Marion	August-September	25-40	No	-	Gas & tires may limit trucks.
Marshall	September	-	No		Tires, a problem.
Mason	August-October	5-6	No	-	Trucking in bad plight.

NEED FOR FRUIT AND VEGETABLE TRUCKS
AS REPORTED BY STATES AND COUNTIES
FOR 1943

STATE AND COUNTY	Peak periods	Trucks on hand	Need more	Number needed	Limiting factors
West Virginia (Cont.)					
Mineral	August-October	25	Yes	9	Not acute.
Monongalia	No peak	-	No	-	
Morgan	August-November	75-100	Yes	7	Repair parts needed.
Ohio	August-September	50	No	None	No problem.
Pendleton	-	-	No	-	
Pleasants	July-August	7	No	-	
Preston	September-October	-	No		Repairs a main problem.
Putnam	July 1-20	100	Yes	25	Truck farmers may have difficulty.
Raleigh	July-October	Enough	No	-	No problems.
Randolph	July-November	8	No	-	
Ritchie	July-September	-	No	-	Lack of repair parts.
Summers	July-October	200	No	-	
Taylor	July-August	-	No	-	Repair parts.
Tucker	July-September	125	No	-	Tires and gas, may be problem.
Tyler	August-September	-	No	None	Plenty of trans- portation.
Upshur	June-August	3	No	-	Pick-up service not counted.
Webster	August-September	33	No	-	Gasoline a limit- ing factor.
Wetzel	August	-	No	-	Mechanics for re- pairs.
Wirt	August-October	10	No	-	

